

black visitor would stay. The doctors knew little of the malady and the laity less. It was Honolulu's first contact with the bubonic plague and a hard, fierce contact it was.

Ho Tai, two years old, lay on a bed of fever in a small room over a Chinese store on Hotel street. Its parents were of the poorest class of Chinese and used to many phases of adversity. They now feared they were going to lose their first-born and both watched over the little sufferer night and day with a devotion that only parental affection can inspire. Twice that afternoon the quarantine inspector had regarded the baby with more than usual interest and the father knew what that meant. The plague was carrying off its victims at the rate of three a day in Chinatown. At 8 o'clock in the evening a doctor came from the Board of Health office to look at the little patient. He made a long and careful examination and then flatly told the father that it had the plague, but the Chinaman knew no English. "Ma'i bubonika!" exclaimed the doctor. The blow came to him in Hawaiian, which he understood. He told his wife and she uttered a scream and fell prostrate on the bed. The doctor opened a shutter and called an inspector, who came and stood at the bedside till an employee of the Sanitary Committee arrived. He took the baby from its bed and carried it to the pest hospital. The mother, seeing her babe torn from her, became frantic with grief. The inexorable law of the Board of Health in time of public danger is above the law of maternal love.

Robbed of their light and joy the parents endured a wretched existence that night and in the early morning were told by the in-

spector that the block would be burned in the afternoon. In their hearts' throes they cared nothing for the destruction of their home; they wanted to know how their baby fared. The inspector could give them no information. They made ready for the fire by collecting what household goods they could carry on their backs. These effects were afterwards fumigated. In the afternoon the couple joined a procession of 2,000 or more of their fellow Asiatics and with them proceeded, under military escort, to Kawaiahao church, which, with its surrounding grounds, had been transformed into a detention camp for Chinese from infected districts. As they left Chinatown great flames roared behind them and a pall of black smoke hung over their heads till they reached the church. The fiend of fire had been set upon the fiend of disease. It was man's only weapon to combat the insidious pest. Early in the evening the Chinese consul entered the camp and sought the father. He found the sorrowful couple seated on the stone steps of the church. Calling the man aside the consul told him his baby was dead and cremated. The secretive manner of the consul aroused dreadful fears in the mother, whose anxiety lent keenness to her sense of hearing as she listened. The burning of the body was almost as much of a shock to her as death and when she heard all she gave a loud cry of anguish and fell sidewise on the step,—dead. A hundred people gathered to pick her up. Some one cried "plague!" and an interpreter and a physician hurried to the spot. The interpreter made some inquiries of her husband and then reported to the person in charge of the camp: "The woman died of a broken heart. That's all."



OPERA IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

The musical critic of the New York *Evening Post* makes an interesting comparison of the reception of opera in Europe and America. Of Chicago, with a population of 2,000,000 inhabitants, he says:

"The indifference shown toward Mr. Grau's company in Chicago seems almost incredible when we look at its make-up. No opera-house in Europe has half as many singers of the first rank as he took West in November. The names of the prima-donnas alone would take away the breath of opera-goers in any European city. There were not only the two most eminent American singers, Mmes. Eames and Nordica, but five of the foremost German and Austrian artists of the century. . . . The plain truth is, that the populace of Chicago, like that of most of our cities, does not care to support good music, for the simple reason that such music gives it no pleasure, being, in fact, more apt to bore it."

In Europe, he claims New York is still recognized as the only city where grand opera is appreciated and great combinations can play successfully. As for the ballet the writer says:

"The ballet has degenerated into a thing to be laughed at. We are far, indeed, in taste, from the times when operatic critics were expected to go into raptures over a Carlotta Grisi, 'bounding like a gazelle at sunrise, when first she starts from her couch of fern, shaking the dew from her haughty crest, lithe of limb, incarnate of grace.'"

The operatic conditions in London and New York he finds identical and grand opera combinations are removed bodily from London to New York.

In Paris he finds that operatic music is dominant,

especially as lately, the chauvinistic quarantine against Wagner has been removed, and now the great German holds the leading place.

In Italy we find nothing but decadence, says the writer: "Italy has long since ceased to supply the world's demand for opera singers, and the very few there are do not remain at home, because they can get so much higher terms in England and America." Verdi is the last of the great composers; for Mascagni, who, when he first appeared on the horizon with his "Cavalleria Rusticana," was thought to be a star, is now admitted, says Mr. Fink, to be only a comet.

Germany is far in the lead of Italy in operatic music, and the keynote of German musical life is cosmopolitanism:

"It is an actual fact that Italian and French operas are oftener sung in Germany than in Italy and France, and to these the Germans add their vast domestic repertory, including about fifty new operas a year."

THE ORPHEUM

The Orpheum departed this week from its usual vaudeville program and gave the public, instead, a very fair presentation of John Dillon's three-act farce comedy, "A Cheerful Liar." The play was well rendered, with Allan Dunn as Hastings Hussel, J.P., the cheerful liar. The full strength of the company was thrown into the cast, with the exception of Miss Ione Beresford, who appeared between acts in her pleasing specialties and coon melodies.

A Cheerful Liar is very funny, and well acted throughout. But the Orpheum of to-day is not the Orpheum of yore before the plague bacilli closed its doors. The Orpheum is associated with vaudeville, and the leopard cannot change its spots. The people want the Orpheum to have vaudeville and not three-act comedies, however funny.

A NOTED ARTIST GONE.

No one regrets the death of the talented artist Solly Walters more than the WEEKLY and it offers heartfelt condolence to his widow. Mr. Walter has served many years as artist on the San Francisco *Chronicle* and the *Wasp*. Mr. Walters was one of the earliest members of the